

Today's News - Thursday, January 7, 2010

- CSBE's al-Asad tackles the unrealistic aspirations of cities going for The Bilbao Effect (starchitects included).
- There's nothing wrong with Dubai's "towering ambition": the Burj Khalifa "stands in glorious contrast to the pessimism of the West...I pity those who lack the imagination to feel excited about it."
- Brussat (in a rare positive take on something modern) says "most recent skyscrapers look like refugees from a Fisher-Price toy factory," but calls the Burj "the most graceful skyscraper of the modern(ist) era" (both takes are recommended reading for anyone following all the negative brouhaha re: former Burj Dubai).
- Moore looks to the future: while "glossy works by big-name architects" are still going up, "there is a long pent-up feeling among architects that there is more to life than shiny, glossy, 'iconic' things," and architecture of a very different sort might move to the fore.
- Russell gives (mostly) thumbs-up to NYC's new Museum of Chinese in America: it's "the perfect spot to consider what it is to be a hyphenated American."
- A Tunisian architect has designed "the largest hotel palace" in Central Asia.
- George Orwell's birthplace is finally set for a makeover "after years of dithering and failed attempts" to restore it - and with hopes to lure tourists to one of the most underdeveloped areas of India.
- Groves on possible good news for a café that used to be the HQ of L.A.'s beatnik scene: it could be designated a city historic-cultural monument (the owner is none too happy).
- A study shows good news for Michigan's climate plan, but additional steps ("greener building construction, greater use of rail transport, more recycling and urban tree plantings") are recommended as well.
- Investors see farms as way to grow Detroit with "an ambitious plan that aims to turn the struggling Rust Belt city into a green mecca."
- Nine European countries band together on a \$43 billion plan for a new power grid to "boost green power and combat climate change" (fingers crossed it happens!).
- Cooper-Hewitt scores two big wins: a \$600,000 grant from The Rockefeller Foundation to develop its "Design for the Other 90%" exhibition into an ongoing series; and IDEO's Bill Moggridge tapped as its new director.
- AIA 2010 Thomas Jefferson Award for design excellence in public and government goes to Curtis Fentress, Les Shepherd, and Ken Greenberg.
- ASLA's latest online resource guide focuses on low-impact materials in sustainable residential landscape architecture.
- Call for abstracts/proposals: International Conference on Sustainable Community Development 2010.
- Two we couldn't resist: a Subway restaurant made of shipping containers is moving up as the Freedom Tower is built: it's "not quite Windows on the World. But workers will have a view that keeps improving."
- The "35th annual List of Words Banished from the Queen's English for Mis-use, Over-use and General Uselessness" ("shovel-ready" included).

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[The Bilbao Effect: Having one or more new buildings - no matter how spectacular they may be - transform a given city by reversing its decline or placing it on the world-cultural map simply is not a realistic aspiration. It takes much more than the construction of architectural icons to make a city successful. By Mohammad al-Asad/Centre for the Study of the Built Environment \(CSBE\) -- Frank Gehry; Zaha Hadid; Norman Foster- The Jordan Times](#)

[Op-Ed: What's wrong with towering ambition? Burj Khalifa in Dubai, the tallest manmade structure in history, stands in glorious contrast to the pessimism of the West...It is an astonishing work of architecture that is inspired in its simplicity and elegance. There is a timeless quality about it...I pity those who lack the imagination to feel excited about it. By Karl Sharro-Spiked \(UK\)](#)

[Superman, meet Dubai's superscraper: The Burj Dubai \[Burj Khalifa\] strikes me as the most graceful skyscraper of the modern\(ist\) era. Most recent skyscrapers look like refugees from a Fisher-Price toy factory. Yet the skyscraper is the only type of building in which modernism may plausibly be said to challenge the superiority of classicism. By David Brussat -- Adrian Smith; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\)- Providence Journal \(Rhode Island\)](#)

[Architects go green for 2010: ...construction being a slow business, it tends to keep on going...So cranes are still whirring over the London skyline, and other glossy works by big-name architects are going up...There is a long pent-up feeling among architects that there is more to life than shiny, glossy, "iconic" things, a feeling which might now find expression in things that are actually built.](#)

[By Rowan Moore -- Rogers Stirk Harbour; Foster + Partners; Jean Nouvel; KPF; Mitchell Taylor Workshop; Witherford Watson Mann; Paul Finch; muf architecture; Nord- Evening Standard \(UK\)](#)

[Chinese-American Past Rescued From Chop Suey Cliche: ...new Museum of Chinese in America...the perfect spot to consider what it is to be a hyphenated American...a rather tentative invitation to a building with richly entwined stories to tell and tough questions to ask. By James S. Russell -- Maya Lin; MGMT Design; Matter Architecture Practice- Bloomberg News](#)

[A Tunisian architect is building the largest hotel palace in Central Asia: ...integrated project involving a hotel and a congress hall in Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat...will cover some 7 hectares and will comprise some 100,000 square metres of buildings in a sea of greenery. -- Ajmi Mimita; Bouygues \[images\]- TunisiaOnlineNews](#)

[Orwell's birthplace to be saved from decay: After being neglected and forgotten for decades, the birthplace of George Orwell, the author of Animal Farm and 1984, is finally set for a makeover...the provincial government says it is coming to the rescue in a bid to lure tourists to one of the most underdeveloped areas of India.- Telegraph \(UK\)](#)

[Seeking Establishment recognition of Beat hangout's importance: The former Venice West Cafe, headquarters of the L.A. beatnik scene...could be designated a city historic-cultural monument...holds great value as a local symbol of the bohemian spirit of the mid-20th century... By Martha Groves \[slide show\]- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Study says Michigan climate plan would boost economy: ...calls for additional steps, such as greener building construction, greater use of rail transport, more recycling and urban tree plantings.- Chicago Tribune](#)

[Investors see farms as way to grow Detroit: Acres of vacant land are eyed for urban agriculture under an ambitious plan that aims to turn the struggling Rust Belt city into a green mecca...The idea of turning this former American manufacturing capital into an agrarian paradise is not that far-fetched, at least not with history as a guide.- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Europe Plans New Power Grid to Boost Green Energy: Nine countries...are hoping to boost renewable energies by creating a new grid to balance out weather-related fluctuations...€30 billion \(\\$43 billion\) project is urgently needed to help boost green power and combat climate change.- Der Spiegel \(Germany\)](#)

[Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum Awarded \\$600,000 Grant from The Rockefeller Foundation to develop its groundbreaking 2007 "Design for the Other 90%" exhibition into an ongoing series...- ArtDaily.org](#)

[Mr. Technology Takes on Design: Co-founder of IDEO tapped for top post at Cooper-Hewitt: ...selecting someone from the private sector...bypassed the usual pool of design curators and museum officials...The message should be clear to all that the appointment signals a new direction for the institution... -- Bill Moggridge- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Three AIA Members Honored with 2010 Thomas Jefferson Awards: Awards recognize design excellence in public and government...all exemplified the architecture profession's regenerative responsibility to make the everyday lives of the public better... -- Curtis Fentress, FAIA; Les Shepherd, AIA; Ken Greenberg, Assoc. AIA \[images\]](#) - AIArchitect

[Sustainable Residential Design: Using Low-Impact Materials: new ASLA online resource guide on using low-impact materials in sustainable residential landscape architecture...the third in a new four part series.](#) - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

[Call for abstracts/proposals: International Conference on Sustainable Community Development 2010 \(July 20-22, Putrajaya, Malaysia\); deadline: February 28, 2010](#) - Universiti Putra Malaysia Institute for Social Science Studies (IPSAS)

[Sandwich Shop Opens at Tower Rising at Ground Zero: ...at the top of the Freedom Tower...a crane hoisted the Subway restaurant up the signature skyscraper...shipping containers-turned-eatery will open in January and keep moving up as the tower is built to 105 floors...not quite Windows on the World. But workers will have a view that keeps improving...](#) (AP) - New York Times

[Lake Superior State University 2010 List of Banished Words: Word "czars" at LSSU "unfriended" 15 words and phrases and declared them "shovel-ready" for inclusion on the university's 35th annual List of Words Banished from the Queen's English for Mis-use, Over-use and General Uselessness.](#) - Lake Superior State University (Michigan)



-- David Chipperfield Architects: Anchorage Museum expansion, Anchorage, Alaska
-- Dominique Perrault: Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, Korea

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